Fransen Graduation Speech Plans Revealed

Jonathan Franzen, the author slated to deliver Kenyon’s 2011 Commencement speech, visited campus to give a lecture on Autobiography and Fiction Writing on Wednesday, Feb. 16, and to participate in an open discussion on Thursday, Feb. 17. Franzen has written four novels, including The Corrections, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and a selection for Oprah’s Book Club. While promoting his most recent book, Freedom, Franzen landed on the cover of Time magazine as the “great American Novelist.”

In his Wednesday night address, Franzen spoke about his early career in writing, difficulties in his past marriage and the 4 worst questions authors are asked in interviews. He began the evening with some of his initial impressions of Kenyon. Dressed in a button-down shirt, blue jeans and an aged, black-leather jacket, Franzen personalized the stereotypical modern writer as he discussed the two competing promotions of Gambier (GAM-bier or GAM-BIER). His tousled silver-gray hair and thick-rimmed glasses contributed to his air of awkwardness, which seemed intentional—as if there were a definite brilliance behind it.

After recounting seeing a black vulture on the north end of campus (which he referred to as the “more artistic end”), he launched into his speech about the four most unwelcome questions he is always asked. “Who are your influences? What time of day do you work? Do your characters take over and tell you what to do? Is your fiction autobiographical?”

Franzen admitted to giving this exact same speech before, at a German university. He frequently stopped to mock himself for using a canned essay, pausing and pulling out a pen to correct phrases that were clearly targeted at a foreign audience, such as “in America, we...” His surprising aptitude for comedic timing and witty answers carried over into the student questioning that followed the talk. Franzen took his time to come up with the best answers he could think of, sometimes pausing long past the point of awkwardness.

Before his common hour discussion on Thursday, Franzen sat down with the Collegian to discuss his books and his plans for the Commencement speech:

**The Kenyon Collegian:** What kind of speech are you going to give at Kenyon graduation? Are you going to talk about your experiences, give life advice or something else?

**JF:** I do tend to write these things at the last minute. I was that way in college, too. I could never stand the people that were done with their papers more than a day in advance of the due date—barbarous. I’m kind of dread- ing the talk because there’s so many ways to do it wrong and so many ways to do it right. It feels a little strange to get up and talk about my own experience. It’s like another self-regarding writer talking about himself. At the same time, life advice is even harder. So, no, I have no idea what I’m going to do. It’ll be an adventure at the last minute.

**TCK:** Are you going to get to know Kenyon better in the meantime in order to gear the talk toward Kenyon students specifically?

**JF:** I don’t anticipate undertaking extensive research. I’ve gotten a clear impression in my 24 hours here and I’ve been hearing about it from Eric for three years and its reputation precedes it also. I think I’m set on that front.

**TCK:** We hear a lot that Kenyon has a great reputation in the literary world and among academics. Is that true, in your experience?

**JF:** It has very strong name recognition in the parts of New York that I travel in.

**TCK:** Did the fact that your good friend David Foster would be hitting these shores, “she said. “Last spring, I asked my dad, ‘Will they be built while I’m here? Can I live in them?’”

Matthew Winkler, Lydia’s father and editor-in-chief of Bloomberg News, donated what Nugent referred to as a “significant” amount to the North Campus project and his contribution made the construction possible. When he attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the project he asked Sarah Kahle, vice president for college relations, if his daughter might be able to live in one.

“I asked Sarah Kahle at the time, last year. When these things are built, would my daughter be able to live in one.”

And the answer was ‘yes,” Matthew Winkler said. “That is not the same thing as a stipulation, it is completely different. I just asked a pretty innocuous ques- tion.”

Winkler said that his daughter’s ability to live there

**Reggae Rebellion**

**Social Board chooses band in last-minute vote**

David McCabe

Staff Writer

Reggae band Rebellion will headline this year’s Summer Sendoff. Social Board made an offer to indie rock stalwarts TV on the Radio, as negotiations continued, TV on the Radio had to decline their offer due to date conflicts. Rebellion’s booking was confirmed by a Social Board source who asked to remain anonymous, because the source is not authorized to speak publicly on the matter.

Meredith Tyna ’11, a spokeswoman for Social Board, declined to comment other than to say that contracts are still being negotiated.

A source close to the Sendoff planning process told the Collegian that Rebellion was booked following an offer to secure TV on the Radio.

The group, who had the date for Sendoff available, approached Social Board toward the end of last semester, according to the source. The source said Social Board waited for a month for the band to respond, at which point they heard of the conflict and decided to pursue other options.

Social Board had to scramble: they had to find a band, and they had to find one fast. After looking over a list provided to them by their booking agent, they took a vote and settled on Rebellion. They made the offer sometime in the past two weeks.

Social Board would not

**see BAND, page 3**

**see HOUSING, page 3**

California reggae band Rebellion will play at Sendoff this year.

David Hoyt

IMAGES COURTESY OF LAST.FM

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California reggae band Rebellion will play at Sendoff this year.
In a 2009 lecture at Pepperdine University, Dr. Cornel West asked his audience, “What does it mean to be a-featherless, two-legged, linguistically challenged, conscious creature born between urine and feces?” He continued, “When you come to an institution like Pepperdine, fundamentally committed to what the Greeks call paideia, deep education, wrestling with what it means to be human, slowly you begin to shift from the superficial to the substantial. From the frivolous to the serious. From the bling-bling to issues of life and death and joy and sorrow. What kind of human being will you be?”

West repeated many of those lines last week during his talk at Kenyon on Friday, Feb. 18, which was organized by the Student Activities Lectures committee. This is not to say that West delivered a recycled speech. Much of his rhetoric, particularly his criticism of the Obama administration, has changed over the past two years. What remains the same is West’s pursuit of a truth still in young people what he learned from Ralph Waldo Emerson: “Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.”

In the modern jungle of the Democratic Party, Cornel West has always been a chameleon. He is a philosopher, a scholar, a pundit and a bluesman. He is an espouser of democratic virtue and a critic of indifference “well-adjusted to injustice, well-adapted to racism, well-adjusted to self-indulgence and self-reliance, between rich and poor.”

Emerson, West’s greatest rhetorical mentor, warned, “There is nothing more important in the culture of man than to resist the dangers of commerce.” In West’s view, that danger has already crept into the house of American democracy.

“There is a chance that we could lose American democracy in this generation,” West said. In his speech, West also alluded to a patriotic superiority which he believes plagues the nation. “We are distinctive because we have distinctive history,” he said. “We are not connected to the deity.”

Throughout his talk, West offered a few solutions to fix the state of American democracy. Some were concrete, like a vociferous re-evaluation of the American prison-industrial complex, which he called the new Jim Crow. Others were philosophical. West argued that the nation needs to employ “the courageous Socratic method” in order to fix the broken, fiscal-minded infrastructure.

Paiedeia, he chanted repeatedly, prodding students to explore the dark depths of their souls. “[Examine] mortality, history, memory and reality,” he said. “Hold these things at arm’s length and you can’t grow up.” Throughout the night, he alluded to paideia, democracy, democracy and the parallel of paideia.

The evening was not without inconsistencies, however. He encouraged global-minded fellow feeling, but then made passing reference to Henry David Thoreau’s Walden, the escape from “the surfeit of human society.”

West cited the Social Network, a film about the Harvard students who founded Facebook, as emblematic of Harvard’s student body — full of bright people who use their smarts to achieve fame, wealth and celebrity. By labeling Facebook a product of — and an output for — narcissism, West overlooks the power of social networking sites have to connect people to active causes. Look at Egypt, where activists reached people and organized protest through the Internet.

At times, West failed to articulate a way around greed and corruption in order to benefit from the innovation the two often produce.

In the end, though, West floored the audience with his charisma, eloquence and progressive vision for America.

After a question and answer period, which West extended, unwilling to leave campus with voices unheard, students rushed the stage. West stuck around long enough to warmly shake every eager hand — even as his bodyguard reminded him it was time to go.

West, who was not on campus long enough to be interviewed by the Collegian, offered us Kenyon in a sentence: “A democratic paideia of the highest sort... that’s what Kenyon means.”

Cornel West spoke to a packed Rosse Hall on Friday, Feb. 18. He spoke about race, philosophy, democracy and politics.

“A democratic paideia of the highest sort... that’s what Kenyon means” - Cornel West

**VILLAGE RECORD**

**Feb. 16 – Feb. 21, 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Medical: injured student in Leonard Residence Hall. Squad transported student to Knox Community Hospital.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 16</td>
<td>6:05 p.m. — Vandalism of College property in Ascension Hall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 17</td>
<td>2:54 p.m. — Medical: ill student in Watson Residence Hall. Student transported to Health Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>1:55 a.m. — Drug/paraphernalia found in Gund Commons. Items confiscated and destroyed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td>1:10 a.m. — Medical: intoxicated student in McBride Residence Hall. Student escorted back to dormitory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td>1:22 a.m. — Medical: intoxicated student in Mather Residence Hall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td>1:55 a.m. — Medical: intoxicated student in New Apartments. Squad contacted and student transported to Knox Community Hospital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>3:38 a.m. — Medical: intoxicated student in Norton Residence Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>1:09 a.m. — Medical: intoxicated student in Old Kenyon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>2:50 a.m. — Vandalism of College property in Old Kenyon Residence Hall.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>3:03 p.m. — Medical: ill student in Lewis Residence Hall. Illness assessed by safety officers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>6:58 p.m. — Medical: Injured student at Kenyon Athletic Center. Squad transported student to Knox Community Hospital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 21</td>
<td>5:35 p.m. — Vehicle accident off campus with College vehicle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 21</td>
<td>6:52 p.m. — Vehicle accident off campus with College vehicle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 21</td>
<td>10:25 p.m. — Medical: ill student in Lewis Residence Hall. Squad transported student to Knox Community Hospital.</td>
</tr>
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It's going to be an exciting semester for poetry aficionados, foreign policy wonks and lovers of baked goods and comedy. Most of all, it's a good semester for anyone who is interested in Asia, the Islamic world or current events in the Middle East. Beginning in February, a series of events made possible by a Tidie Violet Undergraduate Internship in International Studies and Foreign Language grant and the Middle Eastern Students Association (MESA), among others, will offer a way to learn more about the Middle East and the Islamic world.

On Feb. 9, Tirta Paris, founder and president of the National Iranian American Council, came to Kenyon to speak on US-Iran relations to a packed富有小剧院Audience. On Feb. 22, Alan Paydin, the Director of the Middle East Studies Center at the Ohio State University, gave a talk in Peace Lounge about "23 Years After Soviet Occupation."" Talks on foreign policy are often one facet of the progr...
Housing Requirements Unfair to All

Home

With SMAs, Nugent Misses the Point

The Enemy is “Off the Record”

In my third year of writing for the Col- legian, I have encountered a number of stories that cannot be told simply because the professors, the administrative staff, and/or the student body will not speak “on the record.” These investiga-
tions have shown me that if the truth can be both a gift and a curse for the journalist. One of the most difficult aspects of this line of work can be knowing the real truth while having to print official state-
ments. In the past, the Col- legian has been criticized for not printing “the whole story,” but a strict code of journalism has forced us to print only what we obtain through careful, balanced, and professional interviews. Though we all hear the real story from friends we trust or from peo-
ple who actually witnessed an event but refuse to be quoted, we can only use that information as a stimulus to ask more questions. Print-
ing a story only once heard or got from someone who was not being interviewed is tantamount to printing a lie, even if we know it is true.

Often, we are forced into a moral dilemma. Do we print a story that we feel is important even though it has not been verified or a story that has been veri-

In my opinion, it is important to always strive to find the truth, but at times we must veer from the path of purely reporting the facts as we know them. In such situations, it is important to present the story with some level of nuance and to acknowledge the limitations of our knowledge. This can be done by stating that the information has not been verified or by using quotes from multiple sources to add context.

For example, if I were covering a story about a local newspaper's decision to not publish an important article, I might write:

“The Kenyon Collegian, a student newspaper on campus, has been facing challenges in recent years. Despite its efforts to publish important stories, it has been forced to reject several articles that the students and faculty believe are crucial to understanding the issues facing the college.

According to the editor, the decision was made due to space limitations and the time constraints of producing the newspaper. The editor explained, “We are a student-run publication, and we have to make sure that we can produce a quality product within the time frame we have.”

However, this decision has been met with criticism from both students and faculty. Some argue that the newspaper should prioritize the publication of important stories, even if it means sacrificing the usual format of the paper.

Despite these challenges, the newspaper continues to publish articles on a wide range of topics, including student life, campus events, and local news.

In conclusion, the Kenyon Collegian faces a difficult balance between producing a quality publication and ensuring that important stories are given the attention they deserve. It is important to continue to support student publications and encourage them to strive for excellence in their reporting.”

In this way, we can continue to uphold the principles of journalism while also acknowledging the limitations of our work.
The Etiquette of Public Speaking

SMAs Respond to Collegian Article

The relationship between audiences and speakers is not unlike the relationship between hosts and guests: extend hospitality, and guests bring gifts. And now, as a guest of the Collegian, I would like to pass on the gift of some tips I have learned — and hope to help this relationship thrive.

Be prepared. If you are invited to speak in front of any group, contact the host — even your own SMAs! — and be ready to give a lecture. The Health and Counseling Center is here to help; we can offer support and understanding as you prepare. Your SMAs can help you by providing information about the new hotline, or even offer to help you with your presentation with peers.

Be enthusiastic and understood. Pay attention to your vocal intonation and variety, and pace yourself. Speaking like Ben Stein will put your audience to sleep, and running though your words like the Flash will only exhaust them. A speech is not just a soliloquy, but an interaction between the speaker and the audience. Be aware of reactions you receive and allow them to inspire your presentation along the way. Above all, aim to entertain and inform.

Be concise. This applies whether you are standing behind the lectern or seated in an audience. Write your speech with your audience’s attention span in mind, and keep extensive descriptions to a minimum. Words read aloud with conviction are more impressive than an own, and are more often hindered than helped by lengthy explanations and extra adjectives. Take advantage of the inflection and emphasis that are unique to the spoken word.

Audience members: if you are asked to ask the presenter a question, ask a specific question, not an abstractly worded question. It’s much easier to immediately understand what you’re asking than to carefully read aloud a question.

We are seeking funding now in conjunction with them and share their knowledge in this area. Inability is a second important reason to have a hotline. It is difficult on any college campus, but especially on one as small as Kenyon, to walk to the Health and Counseling Center and meet with an SMA because it is a relatively visible place. A hotline allows students to call in from a place where they feel comfortable and safe. It allows them complete control over the support they use, even if they are ready to meet face to face or talk to a counselor. Although reporting has increased by more than 30 percent of sexual assaults still unreported.

Victims feel uncomfortable reporting to officials because of the long and emotionally draining judicial process involved with sexual assault cases. Some victims are more comfortable speaking with peers, especially with peers like the SMAs who have experience dealing with similar situations or who may have dealt with assault themselves.

The last issue we hope to address with the hotline is availability. The Health and Counseling Center is closed over the weekend and at nights and dean’s and nurses are off-campus during these times. Somebody on the Counseling Center and a nurse practitioner are on call 24/7, however, calling Safety does not guarantee that someone will come to campus to talk to or examine you. The presence of SMAs as part of the student body is important, given that 43 percent of rapes occur between 6:00 p.m. and midnight, and 24 percent occur between midnight and 6:00 a.m. When sexual assault does occur, it can be difficult to approach those who are equipped to help, whether they are professional counselors or other peers. Even considering that many students feel more comfortable speaking with peers than with professionals, it can be difficult to pick an individual face off of a poster and come talk about such a challenging and emotional topic.

In contrast, in our experience, those who come to us for advice know us in some other context, and feel comfortable given that faith.

Victims of sexual misconduct can be mistreated as well. We hope these are equipped to help, whether they are professional counselors or other peers. Even considering that many students feel more comfortable speaking with peers than with professionals, it can be difficult to pick an individual face off of a poster and come talk about such a challenging and emotional topic.

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Be sensitive. Again, this advice goes both ways. Audience members: if you are asked to ask the presenter a question, ask a specific question, not an abstractly worded question. It’s much easier to immediately understand what you’re asking than to carefully read aloud a question.

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In contrast, in our experience, those who come to us for advice know us in some other context, and feel comfortable given that faith. A hotline will provide a completely anonymous outlet that is available to everyone 24/7 and still offers the benefit of confidentiality and support with a peer. This is not to say that students should avoid calling Safety or a dean, but it does offer an important alternative that allows students confidential, immediate and trusted contact on campus.

The last issue the hotline seeks to address is the ignorance of male sexual assault victims and the lack of resources provided for them. Men are also the least likely group to report sexual misconduct, possibly due to the shame attached to the issue. One challenge to masculinity that sexual violence against men is assumed blame that often occurs. Additionally, men are, in most cases, seen as the aggressors, making it harder to expect an acceptance that they can be mistreated as well. We hope that more men on campuses will support the hotline as a source of information and a means of support.

The SMAs would like to thank and commend the Office of Student Affairs and the Council for reaching out to us and providing funding for the hotline at a time when the College is not able to. Thanks to their help, the hotline will soon be functional for the student body to use.

The Etiquette of Public Speaking

SMAs Respond to Collegian Article

Quick Complaints

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Whatever Happened to the Peanuts Characters?

MOLLY BONDY Staff Writer

Dog Sees God opens with the death of Snoopy and details the lives of the Peanuts characters as young adults — grappling with what it means to come of age in American society.

Their youthful characters have been transformed into drug-addicted, sexually active ... young adults.

as one to Linus’ blanket, clue the audience in on who is who.

The curtain opens on CB, played by Atticus Koontz ’14, lamenting the death of Snoopy, a loyal pet and friend. It immediately becomes clear that this interpretation of Peanuts is not a continuance of Charles Schulz’s humorous comic strip, but rather a darker exploration of what it means to come of age in America today. Even the expression “coming of age” does not quite capture the experiences these teens face, as director Robbie Sellers ’14 put it, the characters have “already lost their innocence.” From Sally’s forays into exotic religions to Marcy and Peppermint Patty’s alcohol drinking in school to Pig Pen’s cocaine addiction, it is evident that these boys and girls are no longer celebrating the miracle of Christmas or the growth of a giant pumpkin.

The first half of the show introduces each character and the emotional baggage they bring with them. CB struggles with the concept of life after death and reaches out to his friends for their opinions on the matter. This creates the underlying backbone of the production, allowing for the other characters’ stories to unfold. The second half, and the part Sellers informs me is the most exciting, brings all the characters together at a party where, as the expression goes, “shit hits the fan.”

As per usual in a high school drama, there is not to be redundant, a lot of drama. One strongly emphasized theme in this particular show is that of homophobia and sexual exploration. Beethoven (Ryan Drake ’14) is definitely gay, but some of the other characters also question their sexual identity. According to Sellers, one of the most startling moments in the play is the kiss between Koontz and Drake. Though this scene is a climactic moment in the plot, it goes beyond just the buzz. In many ways, it will touch Kenyon students, both gay and straight, because of the relatable confusion and fear surrounding sex that it expresses.

This is not the only aspect of this show that the audience will find connection with. Considering the fact that these characters are nearly our age and facing similar struggles, it is understandable why the Renegade Board chose to produce this show. Though there are moments of exaggerated teenage angst, for the most part the audience will be able to identify with the Peanuts crew just as they did when they were children.

Visiting Teacher Reads in Recent Poetry Series

DAN KIPP Staff Writer

This past Monday, Feb. 21 marked the beginning of what David Lynn called “the Gambier mud season,” apt description until it started snowing.

Regardless of inclement weather, the Cheever Room of Kenyon’s Finlay House was packed to the walls with Kenyon students, professors, and the greater Knox County community eager for a poetry reading from Jake Adam York.

Every spring semester, Kenyon brings in an outside educator to teach at Kenyon as the visiting Thomas Chair professor. Professor York, an associate professor of English and creative writing at the University of Colorado Denver, is this year’s recipient.

“I woke up in a beautiful place and I don’t know how I got here,” York said of Kenyon. “I’m very much enjoying being here.” This semester he is teaching two creative writing courses, and his “students are very good sports in some difficult business.”

York sees this “difficult business” as more than just writing poetry — it’s a singing of stories, entering a relationship with the subject on which one is writing.

York sees this “difficult business” as more than just writing poetry — it’s a singing of stories, entering a relationship with the subject on which one is writing.

Molly Pavitt
Wonderful Town featured both the Kenyon Wind Ensemble and the Opera and Musical Theatre Workshop in a joint-production of the Broadway classic.

Wonderful Town opened with a guide, Nathan Huey ’13, showing sisters Ruth and Eileen (played by Jill Hanley ’13 and Julia Dopp ’13, respectively) the sights of New York City. Blonde bombshell Eileen hopes to become an accomplished actress while shy and modest Ruth desires better capture the hilarious and endearing personality of Frank, who eagerly proclaims, “I better get back to the drugstore... it’s pandamonium down there.”

Ruth, meanwhile, fails numerous times to get her stories read and ends up at the office of newspaper editor Bob Baker (Andrew D’Amico ’12), who also romances Eileen with drugstore delicacies, like red wine free with purchases of five dollars or more, and she soon finds herself “A Little Bit in Love” with Frank. Huey couldn’t have performed the hilariously desirable personality of Frank, who eagerly proclaims, “I better get back to the drugstore... it’s pandamonium down there.”

But love is awkward and modest, perfectly portraying the sister who believes she will never measure up to the other’s beauty. A highlight of the production was a scene which broke from the static aspect of the play. Ruth is sent off to cover her first story, about Brazilian nacy cadets, but she learns upon arriving that all the sailors want to do is learn to dance the “Conga.” The men — D’Amico, Huey and Max Kiliff ’13 — all don big red sombreros and surround Ruth whilst dancing to the ensemble’s rhythm. Even the musical director, Associate Professor of Music, Dane Hirschfetter, put on a sombrero and twirled to a quick conga, much to the delight of the audience. Afterwards, in an ambiguously presented aftermath, Eileen is arrested for causing a riot and led down the aisles to jail.

After a drawn-out sequence in which Eileen and Ruth both realize that they love Baker (when did that happen?), Ruth yields to Eileen because of her superior knowledge of men. In an odd twist of events Eileen, then reveals to Baker that she knows he loves Ruth in “It’s Love.” Perhaps it was the first act’s hour and fifteen minute-length that drained the viewer, but the second act seemed to follow a complex set of occurrences that resolved after little dispute and wrapped up after 20 minutes.

Overall, Wonderful Town was a creative take on a classic and one that tested both the actors’ artistic ability and audience’s imagination. Although lengthy, it had a humorous and amusing atmosphere from the not-so wonderful work to come before spring break and provided just the amount of comic relief to last until break.

Brave Potato One-Acts Feature Beer, Birds, MC Hammer Pants

MEREDITH TYMA
Staff Writer

This past weekend, student-led Brave Potato Productions presented a One-Act Festival. On Feb. 18 and 19, 18 students put up a progression of five plays. The short plays, ranging from a collage of segmented scenes to a one-woman act, took place at the Black Box Theater.

The night began with confusion. A few minutes into Lewis Gardner’s play Pet and Joe at the Dew Drop Inn, directed by Pat Kanaley ’11, the lights turned off and the actors disappeared. The scenes were chopped up and presented between the other one-acts, binding the festival together. The play, set in a bar, presented a collage of segmented scenes to a one-woman act, took place at the Black Box Theater.

The plot included 24 characters — all played by Sophie Blumberg ’12 with stage direction read by Miles Pattinson ’12. The play, which Pattinson also directed, revolved around a controversial question — do we have to pay income tax? Linking employees, high school girls and officers together through different forms of communication, Blumberg created a “telephone game” of stories. A notable character was The Superbly Scary Girl Who Knows Practically Everything, whose wide-eyed presence was so strong a laugh from the audience. Toward the beginning, however, character transitions and plot were a bit difficult to follow.

Considering the intense material, by no means was a creative take on a classic and one that tested both the actors’ artistic ability and audience’s imagination. Although lengthy, it had a humorous and amusing atmosphere from the not-so wonderful work to come before spring break and provided just the amount of comic relief to last until break.

But love is awkward and modest, perfectly portraying the sister who believes she will never measure up to the other’s beauty. A highlight of the production was a scene which broke from the static aspect of the play. Ruth is sent off to cover her first story, about Brazilian navy cadets, but she learns upon arriving that all the sailors want to do is learn to dance the “Conga.” The men — D’Amico, Huey and Max Kiliff ’13 — all don big red sombreros and surround Ruth whilst dancing to the ensemble’s rhythm. Even the musical director, Associate Professor of Music, Dane Hirschfetter, put on a sombrero and twirled to a quick conga, much to the delight of the audience. Afterwards, in an ambiguously presented aftermath, Eileen is arrested for causing a riot and led down the aisles to jail.

After a drawn-out sequence in which Eileen and Ruth both realize that they love Baker (when did that happen?), Ruth yields to Eileen because of her superior knowledge of men. In an odd twist of events Eileen, then reveals to Baker that she knows he loves Ruth in “It’s Love.” Perhaps it was the first act’s hour and fifteen minute-length that drained the viewer, but the second act seemed to follow a complex set of occurrences that resolved after little dispute and wrapped up after 20 minutes.

Overall, Wonderful Town was a creative take on a classic and one that tested both the actors’ artistic ability and audience’s imagination. Although lengthy, it had a humorous and amusing atmosphere from the not-so wonderful work to come before spring break and provided just the amount of comic relief to last until break.

Brave Potato One-Acts Feature Beer, Birds, MC Hammer Pants

MEREDITH TYMA
Staff Writer

This past weekend, student-led Brave Potato Productions presented a One-Act Festival. On Feb. 18 and 19, 18 students put up a progression of five plays. The short plays, ranging from a collage of segmented scenes to a one-woman act, took place at the Black Box Theater.

The night began with confusion. A few minutes into Lewis Gardner’s play Pet and Joe at the Dew Drop Inn, directed by Pat Kanaley ’11, the lights turned off and the actors disappeared. The scenes were chopped up and presented between the other one-acts, binding the festival together. The play, set in a bar, presented a collage of segmented scenes to a one-woman act, took place at the Black Box Theater.

The plot included 24 characters — all played by Sophie Blumberg ’12 with stage direction read by Miles Pattinson ’12. The play, which Pattinson also directed, revolved around a controversial question — do we have to pay income tax? Linking employees, high school girls and officers together through different forms of communication, Blumberg created a “telephone game” of stories. A notable character was The Superbly Scary Girl Who Knows Practically Everything, whose wide-eyed presence was so strong a laugh from the audience. Toward the beginning, however, character transitions and plot were a bit difficult to follow.

Considering the intense material, by no means was
Lord Gaga Shows They are Born This Way at Debut Concert

LANA DUBIN
Staff Writer

Within ten days of the start of the semester, I was well acquainted with Lord Gaga. I had heard my friends’ complaints about “don’t call my name, don’t call my name Alejandro,” loudly and repetitively waking them at 9:00 a.m. This term, their full semester Community Advisor was replaced with Jeffrey Hechler ’12. Hechler had converted his CA dorm room into a convenient and well-equipped practice space for a newly created band, Lord Gaga. The premise was simple — the band would replicate Lady Gaga’s ubiquitous hits note for note, starting themselves, in goofy costumes. If one were to stroll through the middle-side of McBride Residence Hall on a Saturday afternoon, he or she would hear what appeared to sound like post-sex Lady Gaga spun though a slightly offbeat tune-o-meter. This absurd, hilarious, genius amalgamation of pop-culture and four earnest male college students, however, was not what I had imagined when I thought of the band my friends had complained about.

My relationship with the band evolved from relative obscurity to curiosity. I wondered what had compelled Hechler, William Plaschke ’13, Zachary Barnett ’11 and Tristan Neviska ’12 to join musical forces to produce what would be the electrifying compositions that set the audience on fire with joy and Gaga fever on Saturday, Feb. 19th. A few weeks ago, I visited my friends on second floor middle-side of McBride and heard them. Upon hearing the familiar bass notes echoing through the hall, I was fixed to the song like a bloodhound to a stag. I wandered down the hall and listened outside Hechler’s room with a few of his residents. I was happy to hear such an enthusiastic tribute to Lady Gaga, but when the band stopped, went over what had been wrong, corrected it, and played the song again. I realized what had been irritating my friends. It was neither Lord Gaga’s music nor the band members that caused the trauma, but the repetitiveness that caused the trauma. Lady Gaga’s fame is so strong, most Americans have heard her songs, and heard them again and again. Hechler’s residents heard her songs so many times, and played by practicing amateur musicians, so less, that they were forever skewed in their opinions of the band. I avoided their hall and refused to let their anti-Gaga bias affirm my opinion of Lord Gaga. I came prepared Saturday night when I went to see the band play at the Village Inn. I brought my camera, notepad, friends and dancing shoes. The opening band, The Lawnmowers, played to an already large and appreciative audience. By the end of their set, the restaurant and bar were both packed with people. They, like me, were curious to hear Lord Gaga. The VI informed audience members in an advertisement that the performance “should be interesting, to say the least” and for people to “bring [their] dancing shoes and some Gaga attitude... style points will be awarded.” Around a dozen audience members had seriously taken their costumes to a Lady Gaga- elaborate level. A few wore particularly sequined dresses or shirts, some hand wrote on their shirts, and the ever-stylish Lady Gaga spun though an all black, sequined, veiled ensemble with black sunglasses, and never broke character. The band was also dressed to the nines, with lead vocalist and Kosinger Barnett in superstar black pumps, a vintage smoking jacket, full makeup and practically nothing else. Keyboardist and bassist Hechler did not disappoint with a gold lamé top and blue pants. Plaschke wore a cape, and Neviska sported colorful face paint as he presided over the drum kit.

Their performance brought the VI to the ground, almost literally. Everyone was dancing and singing along and most left with a good feeling. Of those who were less than satisfied were those who judged Lord Gaga by their frequent small mistakes and awkward delivery, and the VI employees who had to clean up the dance floor and broken lighting fixtures after the concert had ended. Rarely do a band of Kenyon students bring an audience to dance as quickly and wholehearted- ly as Lord Gaga did Saturday night. For what it represents, and for the sheer joy of the music, Lord Gaga was wonderful.

Poet Recalls Childhood Experiences

In his poem “Letter to be Read by Furnace Light,” York evokes the world of music, combined with his father’s profession, turning iron into steel: “This is the music of steel, / this is the music we burn down mountains for.” Rolling and flowing much like the locomotives he reverently references, York tells of “light and music that is ours.”

“What music is he talking about? In his honest, Southern accent, when asked what he listened to, York smiled and said, “All of it.” This was quickly checked, as he said, “I don’t listen to whatever’s on the Grammys.” He was also a fan of popular music, calling it the “pornography of music.”

York believes that the poet embraces the relationship with whatever he writes about — it is a photo of a lynching, history or music. “I don’t want to be in a relationship with Biebs,” he said.
FRANZEN: Author Speaks on Four Worst Interview Questions

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Wallace spoke at a Kenyon graduation influence your decision to write novels? JF: He and I were very close and also friendly rivals, so the fact that he had done a noteworthy address here himself was, if anything, assiducent. It’s part of being friends. We try to avoid head-to-head things. We only appeared in public together once, a reading in New York, and we both hated the experience and never wanted to do it again. The main reason I wanted to [give the commencement address] was I thought it would be fun with my nephew graduating. I knew my brother and sister-in-law would be here and … I was going to come anyway. Why not try my hand at it?

TKC: In the Time magazine interview you said you disable the wireless on your laptop because you can’t write good fiction with the internet connected. Do you feel the internet is a distraction or a bad influence on writing? JF: It’s mostly a distraction. It’s noisy and I think what the fiction writer has to offer to culture is reports from places of quiet. If you turn the noise down then you can hear things people aren’t listening to. I think that’s true in a very practical way. If it’s election season and I’m checking the polls every hour … that’s important to the country, but it’s not important to me. I can’t get to the stuff that is important as long as I’m paying attention to that.

TKC: In your interview with The Guardian you talked about how America has become a “rogue state” and how that has stemmed from this “childish notion of freedom” that you said many Americans have. In your close examination of the family in your novels, are you trying to answer the “why” of America — how the people influence America? JF: I’m trying to tell stories, and one of the real contributions that literary theory has made in the last decades is to reinforce this notion of “master narrative,” of narrative as a vehicle through which we apprehend the world and fiction writers are storytellers and I’m not really trying to explain anything because I don’t have the answers. I’m trying to fashion answers that have some sort of meaning and [get] attention to the country I’m living in and the times I’m living in. Those factors are part of the narrative. I’m not trying to come up with the story. It’s just trying to come up with a story that makes some sort of sense that people can connect with and feel that it’s not just a completely out-of-control, unmanageable reality that we are dealing with. It seems that the contribution we make as writers is endeavoring to make sense of something on our own terms, whatever those terms might be.

TKC: What do you want people to take away from these novels? Are you trying to implement some social change or get Americans to look at themselves? JF: No.

TKC: Is it just to create a good read, then? JF: No, not that either. I’m writing for people who were not satisfied with the shop-worn narratives that the big media is abounds with. I sense an inadequacy in the culture and feel alone and like, “Am I the only one who feels this way?” The books are a way of reaching out and saying, “You know, you’re not alone. I feel that way too.”

TKC: Are you working on anything else right now? JF: I’m working on a piece for The New Yorker about the origins of the English novel and prospects for the novel in this heavily mediated world.

Catherine Weitzel
Staff Writer

This week, the Collegian chose Oli Olufemi ’14 and Dulce Montoya ’14 for its style profiles. Oli is a member of the jazz a cappella group Take 5 from Chicago, Ill. who wants to major in sociology. Dulce is a Wkco from Brooklyn, N.Y. who wants to be a volatile person.

Collegian: How would you describe your style?

Oli Olufemi: I don’t like to wear pants. It comes down to what I can find in the closet in the morning. I kind of go for a faux-hipster thing, but I wouldn’t really call it that. I like shiny things.

Dulce Montoya: I really like to look at past decades – during this year I noticed I had a grunge kick. I tend to pick up on modern fashions really late, but two or three years down the road I’ll try things. I tend to wear a lot of Zapporin T-shirts. Throughout all of high school I only wore skirts, which I influenced by my school uniform.

Collegian: Do you have any fashion icons?

Oli: Katherine Hepburn. Wait, that’s kind of ironic since I don’t like pants. I admire both of the Hepburns, really. Ava Gardner is also one of my fashion icons.

Dulce: I’m sure I do, but I just don’t really like looking up to people for that. I’m sure subconscious I’m influenced by people, but I like to mold myself.

Collegian: Where do you like to shop?

Oli: Zara’s and Urban Outfitters. I don’t like shopping online because I like instant gratification.

Dulce: Then I’d say, “Junk Food” that I like because they do a lot of retro T-shirts. I have to admit Urban Outfitters has great jeans. I don’t mind the occasional chain store — Forever 21 and stores like that.

Collegian: What is your favorite piece of clothing or accessory?

Oli: A good pair of ear-rings. I loved the bustling -out the short hair now. With the amount of clothing I’ve lost at Kenyon, I don’t know — I like good accessories. Capes has a lot of my sweaters.

Dulce: I like different pieces at different times — sometimes I’ll be in my big buttoned corded tights or a specific Zeppelin T-shirt or my Urban jeans. I tend to be a very eclectic person.

Collegian: What is your favorite part about your own personal style?

Oli: How everyone tends to complement how put-together I look, even though I tend to wake up 20 minutes before classes and I tend to find things that match. I kind of always wake up late for my morning classes.

Dulce: I think it would have to be my shoe collection. I don’t display my accessories, but I own a lot of shoes.

Collegian: Do you read anything about fashion?

Oli: I read fashion blogs: Color Me Nasa and Style Scrapbook. Most of it is people documenting what they wear, but I like it. A few of my friends run blogs about fashion and music and culture.

Dulce: Sporadically, I will read an article on fashion or read a fashion blog. It’s just as easy to acquire all this information that you don’t really realize where it’s coming from.

Collegian: Do you ever just chill out in sweats?

Oli: If I’m at home I will, but if I’m in a public setting I try not to. Dressing nicely makes me feel better, so I’m having a bad day you’ll probably see me dressed up.

Dulce: More likely leggins, but yeah I love the go.
Local Chinese Restaurant Serves Americanized Cuisine

DAVID HOYT
Co-Photo Editor

Hunan cuisine, one of the eight regional cuisines of China, is known for its spice and for having a fresh aroma and deep color. The fare at Mount Vernon's Huan Garden, however, does not taste significantly different from the food served at any of the multitude of run-of-the-mill Chinese restaurants found throughout the United States. This is not necessarily a bad thing; Huan Garden does an adequate job of serving standard Americanized Chinese dishes like sweet and sour chicken and crispy orange beef, even if it does not necessarily do anything special.

Huan Garden is located in a standard strip-mall storefront, and its interior decor is also pretty standard for a value-oriented Chinese restaurant. My friends and I were seated promptly and courteously when we visited and given complimentary tea in addition to water. We enjoyed the tea as we waited for our food, finding it fresh and well-flavored, yet mild. Our appetizers arrived shortly and were perhaps the highlight of the meal: the meat-filled dumplings were crispy and flavorful, if a little bit overfried. Our entrees were nothing to write home about; the General Tso's chicken, crispy orange chicken and sesame chicken were likely all the same exact meat served with different sauces, and my crispy orange beef almost certainly shared the same sauce as its poultry-based counterpart. In general, we found the meat to be well-cooked and tasty, but slightly too greasy. The menu has a small vegetarian section. My entree had a chili pepper symbol next to it on the menu, and it was mildly spicy, but certainly not overwhelmingly so. As expected, plenty of steamed white rice was provided, but contrary to popular practice at most other Chinese restaurants, chopsticks were provided only upon request.

The restaurant is reasonably priced, although it still can't bear the weight of another local favorite, Allison's Finer Diner (which, to be fair, serves a completely different kind of food). On the busy Saturday night when we visited the waiforest (mostly non-Chinese, for the record) seemed hurried and service was fairly slow - even inattentive at times. This is exactly what was most likely an anomaly, however, as Huan Garden's service during several past visits has been consider-ably better, although the staff never seems to be as polite and friendly as the Allison's staff. Huan Garden is what it is: a Chinese restaurant. If it were not so conveniently located, it might not be worth a visit, but luckily it's well situated as a nice place to go for dinner after a Wal-Mart run or just for a brief escape from campus. Huan Garden is not special. It is not terribly authentic, but it does serve appetizing food, and that's really what matters.

Huan Garden 1516 Coshocton Avenue Mount Vernon, OH 43050 (740) 393-1313
The Kenyon women's basketball team won their third conference game on Saturday, Feb. 19, beating Wittenberg University in the conference tournament quarterfinals, and moving on to the semifinals this upcoming weekend.

The game against the Tigers was hard fought, but the Ladies extended their lead at one point up 28-11. Wittenberg battled back and got the difference down to eight points with 1:25 left in the game. However, the bookstore Manager Jim Yellow heard-of five for nine from the floor. Co-Captain Morgan Korinek '12 had another solid effort, with 11 points, seven rebounds and five steals. Those five steals tied Korinek for fourth for her career with All-American Annie Dugan '08.

The Ladies also played Allegheny College last Saturday. The team used this last home game of the regular season to honor their senior players: Kat Powers, Samantha Reichenbach and Taylor Lenci. All three seniors are this year's captains. The Ladies were able to win with a score of 73-45. Helfant said the team is very proud of the game and the seniors.

"They have been a more fitting way to honor our seniors," Helfant said. "We want to play really well and have them all score and have the team play so well it was very gratifying."

Helfant and Hirt put in strong performances against the Gators, tying for game high for the team with 15 points, as well as Ernst with 14 points. Powers led the seniors with 13 points. As the Conference tournament continues, the Ladies now look towards the regular season's final game on Wednesday, Feb. 25, when they will face nationally-ranked Denison for the third time this season. The ladies have not been victorious in their last two games against Denison, both games were competitive, and the Ladies have an opportunity to gain back Kevin Ye '13 perfect record. Helfant said the game will be tough.

"We will need to very carefully and try to save their legs for Friday's game," Helfant said. "We will put together a game plan and scout report to give us the best opportunity to win."

Helfant also added, "We have had an opportunity this game to go one more time in the last two minutes of both games. It's all about finishing now."
NINA ZIMMERMANN / Assistant Editor

Despite making great strides all season long, the Kenyon men’s basketball team saw their season come to an end at the hands of two conference rivals. They lost their final game of the regular season to Allegheny College, then fell to Wabash College in the conference tournament final. The Lords ended the regular season with an overall record of 9-15. Their season came to an end Tuesday night when they lost to Washington College in the NCAC championship tournament.

First, the Lords took on Allegheny. The Gators barely escaped with a victory, beating the Lords 74-71 at Tomsett Arena on Saturday, Feb. 19. The loss was especially tough for the Lords because it was their Senior Day, and they honored the three graduating members of the squad. The fact that it was Senior Day made the loss even harder to take, according to Head Coach Dan Priest.

“[They] really embraced change and have given their whole hearts to the program. They are wonderful young women. For only the second time in Steen’s career, all of the seniors on the men’s team may have qualified for the national team, which he says is characteristic of their efforts. "They’ve been terrific," Steen said. "It might be that all five seniors will make the national team, and we’ve only had that once before. That’s good leadership, to have, and they’ve done that all four years.""

The Lords and Ladies have high hopes for their trip to Knoxville, and both coaches have stressed that success is guaranteed if the team meets its potential. As the second weekend in Steen’s career, all of the seniors on the men’s team may have qualified for the national team, and he says they’re optimistic about winning. "They’ve been very competitive," Steen said. "It might be that all five seniors will make the national team, and we’ve only had that once before. That’s good leadership, to have, and they’ve done that all four years.""

"I’ve been real happy," said Head Coach Jim Steen. "We were satisfied," said, "We don’t normally prioritize this meet, but this year we decided to rest a little less for the conference meet, and some of those seniors had a great shot at pulling it all together. We felt that it was in their best interest." Even though Kenyon failed to win the NCAC Championship, the Lords had a third year in a row. Steen believes that his team is mentally strong going into the NCAA Championships next month. "They’re confident," Steen said. "Right now, we’re going through a series of steps that we’ve started this week to hopefully bring out the best in these guys."

The Lords and Ladies finished second in the NCAC Championship to archival Drexel, but Books remains confident that their swimmers are poised for achievement. "[Confidence] should be strong after this past weekends swims," he said. "It was a good re- minder of what they can do. [The swimmers] should be feeling good that they’re doing what they need to do to be competitive." The National Championship meet, held in Knoxville, Tenn. in late March, will be the final race for several Kenyon seniors, including five Lords and seven Ladies. Both Books and Steen emphasized that their contribution of leadership has been a driving force for the Kenyon program. "I could be more proud of that group of girls," Book said. "I absolutely know it."